

MISCELLANEOUS NOTES

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20. A RANGE EXTENSION OF *GEOCHELONE ELONGATA*

Three land tortoises are known from India, *Geochelone elongata*, *G. elegans* and *G. travancorica*. *Geochelone elongata* and *G. elegans* are widespread, whereas *G. travancorica* is restricted to the Travancore Hills and the western and eastern slopes of the Ghats (Annandale 1915).

Geochelone elongata has been found in Sal forests from the Jalpaiguri district, W. Bengal, Singbhum district, Bihar (Chaibassa and Chotanagpur), Orissa, Puri district, Simlipal in the Mayurbhanj district of Orissa, India, Bangladesh (Akyab and Chittagong Hill Tracts), Nepal, Burma, Cambodia and Vietnam (Biswas *et al.* 1978). The reference of Biswas *et al.* (1978) to Nepal *G. elongata* came from Smith (1931). An exact locality for Smith's record is unavailable. Apparently, this species is restricted to Sal forests.

In April 1974, one of us (C. A. R., witnessed by R. Whitaker) found an individual of *G. elongata* about 300 km further west than previously recorded. This specimen was found at dusk in Sal forest while returning from gavial survey work on the Ramganga River in northwestern Uttar Pradesh, Garhwal district, about 75 km west of the Nepal border. The specimen was active when found in the vicinity of the Gairal Forest Rest House, Corbett National Park, about 25-30 km northwest of Ramnagar. The

specimen was photographed and released because it was found in a national park and collection permits were not available. Color slides are deposited in the Department of Herpetology, Museum of Comparative Zoology, Harvard University (MCZ slide collection catalogue number 778-79) and are available for verification of our identification.

Smith (1931) had speculated that the current distribution of *G. elongata* and *G. travancorica* is relictual and noted a similar distribution in *Malanochelys trijuga*. Smith also contended that it was unlikely that *G. elongata* ever extended across the Gangetic Plain. The Uttar Pradesh specimen and the report of Biswas *et al.* (1978) falsify this contention and suggests that *G. elongata* may yet be found in isolated patches of Sal forest throughout northern India.

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21. SOME FIELD NOTES ON THE NEWLY-DESCRIBED TOAD, *BUFO CAMORTENSIS* MANSUKHANI & SARKAR

In *Bulletin Zoological Survey of India* 3 (1 & 2): 97-101 1980, (Mrs.) M. R. Mansukhani and A. K. Sarkar of the Zoological Survey of India, Calcutta, have described a new species of toad *Bufo camortensis* based partly on specimens obtained by me at Camorta, Central Nicobars on 30th March 1976.

When first seen after dusk they were very common along paths through grass-covered clearings. They were strikingly paler than the Common Toad (*B. melanostictus*) and drew further attention by attempting to climb on to

the tussocks of grass in their efforts to escape. When caught, they felt very cold to the touch, another character which appeared to separate them from *melanostictus*. Similar specimens were obtained on Katchal Island, Central Nicobars on 24th March 1977 when there with Dr. K. K. Tiwari, Director, Z.S.I., and again noted as cold to the touch.

Toads obtained on the Andaman Islands and on Car Nicobar have been identified as *B. melanostictus*.

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22. EXTENSION OF RANGE OF THE PUTITOR MAHSEER, *TOR PUTITORA* (HAM.) (CYPRINIFORMES; CYPRINIDAE; BARBINAE) TO POONCH VALLEY (JAMMU AND KASHMIR)

In southern Asia the barbs are represented by the closely related genus *Tor* Gray in which the scales are much larger than in the genus *Barbus* Cuvier. These large-scaled barbs, locally known as the Mahseers, are distributed all along the Himalayas, being found in various hill-streams and upper reaches of rivers of the northern latitudes. They are typical rheophiles as their body is adapted to life in mountain torrents and fast-flowing streams. Like

the Salmon they are capable of leaping against currents and ascending waters.

In the ichthyofauna of Jammu and Kashmir State the Mahseer is represented by *Tor putitora* (Ham.) which was reported from Kashmir Valley by Hora (1939), Silas (1960) and Das (1965). The present report of the occurrence of this teleost from Poonch Valley is, therefore, an extension of the range of distribution of this